



STEPHANIE RAWLINGS-BLAKE

MAYOR

*100 Holliday Street, Room 250
Baltimore, Maryland 21202*

August 12, 2010

The Honorable Beverly Swaim-Staley
Secretary, Maryland Department of Transportation
7201 Corporate Center Drive
PO Box 548
Hanover, MD 21076

RE: Baltimore City Priorities – Consolidated Transportation Program – FY 2012 – 2017

Dear Secretary Swaim-Staley:

Thank you for allowing the City of Baltimore and Maryland's other local governments to provide early input into the development of the Consolidated Transportation Program for FY 2010 – 2015. We appreciate the support that MDOT has provided to the City of Baltimore through the modal administrations and direct funding from the Secretary's Office budget over the past two years.

Working together, and despite difficult economic conditions, we are making great progress on many of our shared priorities that exemplify Governor O'Malley's *Smart, Green and Growing* agenda. The initiatives outlined below reflect opportunities for partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve access to the Port of Baltimore, and support transit-oriented development.

Baltimore Red Line – Baltimore City continues to be a strong supporter of the Red Line Transit Project. We continue to work closely with MTA staff in advancing the amended Locally-Preferred Alternative through the New Starts process. We believe that the State needs to set a firm target for beginning construction on the Red Line, just as it did with the InterCounty Connector. To this end, the City is preparing to begin construction in October 2012 on two projects totaling nearly \$65 million which support the Red Line: reconstruction and widening of Edmondson Avenue bridge over the Gwynn's Falls and the "Boh'Donnell Street" connector road in Southeast Baltimore.

Commuter Bus to Southeast Baltimore – The tremendous growth in the Fells Point to Canton/Bayview corridor of Southeast Baltimore is increasing constrained by the lack of transportation capacity. Specifically, the lack of transit alternatives in the corridor has been repeatedly noted by the business community, which is strongly supporting both the Red Line Transit Project and the proposed Bayview MARC Station. Until these major transit investments are built, we believe that an expansion of commuter bus service from Harford County and White Marsh to Southeast Baltimore is the most viable option for providing commuter-oriented transit service to the area. The City has learned from MTA that the cost of providing the above service would be approximately \$567,000 annually, less any fares received. The City has agreed to dedicate \$400,000 of our annual CMAQ allocation towards this service, provided that MTA matches any difference between the actual cost of service and the City contribution.

New Vail Street Extension to Chesapeake Commerce Center – The expected growth of the Port of Baltimore due to the Ports America agreement and berthing improvements has given rise to a need for additional warehousing/light industrial space adjacent to the Port of Baltimore. The City/State partnership which has resulted in the conversion of the former GM plant on Broening Highway to the Chesapeake Commerce Center is one such opportunity; however, trucks accessing this site have a circuitous and time-consuming route to reach their destination from Dundalk and Seagirt Marine Terminals. Baltimore City has recently completed concept planning for an extension of New Vail Street from Keith Avenue across CSX and Norfolk Southern railroads directly into the Chesapeake Commerce Center. The estimated design and construction cost of this project is \$19.5 million. Baltimore City requests that MDOT jointly fund the engineering phase of this project (total cost of \$2.3 million) and assist the City in fashioning a public-private partnership for the construction of New Vail Street.

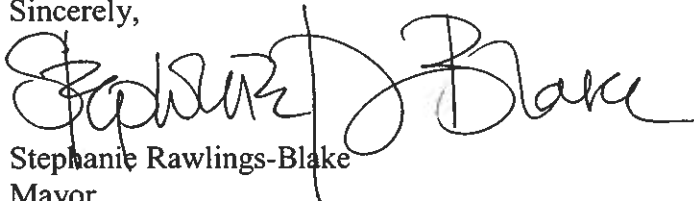
Kent Street Transit Plaza and Westport Transit-Oriented Development – Baltimore City DOT and the Maryland Transit Administration jointly submitted an application under the Federal Transit Administration's "Bus and Bus Facilities Livability Grant" program to improve the area around the Westport Light Rail Transit Station. We were pleased to receive an award of \$516,000 towards an estimated project cost of \$1.9 million for the Kent Street transit plaza and streetscape elements of project. The City has committed to funding half of the difference between award amount and the construction estimate. We request that MDOT fund the other half of the difference.

War of 1812 Bicentennial Celebration – In anticipation of the War of 1812 200th anniversary celebration at Fort McHenry, Baltimore City DOT is planning to establish a new route of the Charm City Circulator to serve this national landmark. DOT was pleased to receive a \$1.2 million grant under FTA's Alternative Transportation in Parks

and Public Lands program to purchase the transit vehicles necessary to launch this 4th route on the Charm City Circulator. As we develop the operating plan for this service, it has become increasingly apparent that service overlaps with MTA's #1 bus route to Fort McHenry; however, the MTA service is much more limited in service span and frequency than could be provided by the Charm City Circulator. We request that MTA/MDOT work with the City to scale back the #1 bus service and apply a portion of the savings towards this new Charm City Circulator route in time for Governor O'Malley's of 1812 200th anniversary celebration. The new route will also assist in the State's effort to retain Under Armour in Baltimore City, and serve a growing residential area with limited transit options. In addition, we ask that the Maryland Port Administration budget appropriately for any dredging or other accommodations which may be necessary to accommodate vessels arriving in Baltimore for bicentennial events.

With your support of the attached requests, Baltimore's economy will continue to grow and people and goods will be moved efficiently throughout the region. Should you have questions about these requests, please contact Mr. Jamie Kendrick, Deputy Director for Administration, Baltimore City Department of Transportation at 410-396-6804. I look forward to your support and to discussing these requests with you at the Fall Tour meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephanie Rawlings-Blake". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the last name "Blake" being particularly prominent.

Stephanie Rawlings-Blake
Mayor
Baltimore City

SRB:JMK:zs

Attachment

cc: Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegation
Sophie Dagenais, Chief of Staff
Kaliope Parthemos, Deputy Mayor, Economic and Neighborhood Development
Khalil Zaied, Director, Department of Transportation
Tom Stosur, Director, Department of Planning
Jay Brodie, President, Baltimore Development Corporation
Jeffrey Buchheit, Director, Baltimore Heritage Area